



Come Again

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The first and only comic book artist ever to win a National Book Award returns with a haunting tale of intimacy, guilt, and collective amnesia.

As the sun sets on the 1970s, the spirit of the Love Generation still lingers among the aging hippies of one "intentional community" high in the Ozarks. But what's missing?

Under impossibly close scrutiny, two families wrestle with long-repressed secrets... while deep within those Arkansas hills, something monstrous stirs, ready to feast on village whispers.

Nate Powell, artist of the National Book Award-winning *March* trilogy returns with a new creator-owned graphic novel.

Come Again Details

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Author : Nate Powell

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From Reader Review Come Again for online ebook

Koen Claeys says

The art is SUPER!!!! The engaging story is a dark and twisted tale that left me a bit confused.

Kristin says

2.5

This would have been more effective at half the page length. The story just rambles on with useless characters and scenes that didn't add anything to the core story(The proto-punk band at the outdoor market). The thing in the cave that feeds off secrets can also eat memories of entire people and cause them to vanish? Or not, if the plot calls for it. Powell's a skilled artist but as a storyteller he needs a tighter editor.

David Schaafsma says

"In a community like this, we are each other's business."

Nate Powell is the only comics artist that has ever won a National Book Award, for his illustration work on Sen. John Lewis's story of his experiences with the civil rights movement in the sixties, *March*, adapted by Andrew Aydin, spanning three books. That and 2008's Eisner Award-winning *Swallow Me Whole*, are some of my favorite graphic works. The latter is one of a group of more personal works that—like Jeff Lemire's work—focus on the struggles of a young boy growing up, dealing with darkly complicated issues.

The story is not a *March* social justice epic, but a smaller, more personal tale of a woman, Haluska, or Hal, who lives in a small Ozarks "intentional" community, co-parenting Jake, with her ex, Gus. Jake is not the focus of the story, but he is important, always there. He's Powell, growing up, in many ways, likely. Hal is having an affair with Adrian, or Ade, who is married to her close friend, and it has been going on for years. They meet for sex in a cave where, as it turns out, some kids also go, and where some fantastical force or creature exists, and where Ade's son is lost for some time.

Powell's previous works, *Swallow Me Whole*, *Any Empire*, and *Sounds of Your Name*, bear some resemblance to *Come Again*. Some aspects of all these works deal with personal isolation and the need for community/family. Nostalgia for the past, and yet regret, sorrow. Black and white, scratchy pen and ink, often without panels, the work gives a sense of the emotional possibilities of using the whole page, as a canvas where images do most of the communicating, work like Craig Thompson's *Blankets* and Jillian Tamaki's work in *This One Summer*. Which is to say *Come Again* is sort of oblique, hard to follow in places, requiring a bit of work in reading the images, feeling like poetic stream-of-consciousness, open. People talk like real people talk, not as in Henry James. They mumble, their voices trail off, and the lettering reflects that. Some pages are almost all inky black with white lettering. The feeling is often bleak, intensely reflective.

The focus of the story is not about the hippie community, which is almost dwindled out, but on these secrets that might exist in any community, that seem connected to this mountain monster. The links between all

these things are not always clearly defined, it's sort of poetic (or maddeningly vague, if you like your stories clear and precise). The struggle between the dark and light has a visual component here, in keeping with the secrecy, and damage, and guilt.

Powell says this is his favorite work so far, but I don't think it will be his readers' favorite, though I do like it a lot, to the extent I understand it after just one reading. It feels bleak, we don't get deep connections or feel much empathy for the characters who exist in these claustrophobic spaces, caves. Feels a little Calvinist in its exploration of secrecy and guilt. That's not a joyful affair Hal and Ade have. Feels like the end of *The Age of Aquarius*, most of those hippie ideals. People don't talk about the issues they have with each other, and yet in the end, we seem to move to some light, some understanding.

What may be one key to understanding this book is that Powell dedicates this book to Ursula K. Le Guin, so the dark fantasy aspects make more sense.

Powell's book is technically awesome and has me brooding about it, and I will read it again and try to figure out more of what it is about, but this dark Ozark cave monster fantasy tale is fascinating. Because Powell is a lifelong punk musician, I like, too, the way he--as he always does--weaves music through his story. Like Lemire, I think he imagines us listening to a mix tape as we read. I'll read this again. Like Lemire, he's a great artist, struggling to figure out how to tell a comics tale about growing up in a small isolated town.

Rod Brown says

Being vague and obtuse and including swirly words and pictures just seems like so much filler in what is essentially a very simple story. Not for me.

Richard says

I disliked this!

The storytelling, in the sense of the combined effect of words and art, was muddled and muddy, although the character designs were sweet. Kind of like somebody stomped all over classic Garry Trudeau pages and I was trying to read them in a dream. That sounds cool, but it was a mess that left me with one of those annoying half-headaches.

I did like the random scene with punk band.

Sara says

I have NO idea what was going on here. I'm not being willfully obtuse I promise. I sincerely don't know what I was meant to take away from this beautifully drawn incomprehensible story.

It's the 70's and whatever is going on here takes place at a dying hippy commune where a woman named Hal is raising her zany little boy as a single mom. Everyone has secrets and is up in everyone else's business. Everything is very groovy and also kind of sad because the "free love" movement is dying or something?

There's also maybe some sort of a thing in a cave that eats people?

I don't know if this was supernatural, if the the whole thing was a dream or an acid flashback or some kind of commentary on the 70's but while it was just as gorgeous to look at as I'd expect from Nate Powell the total lack of a coherent narrative totally killed this one for me.

Kirsten says

This delivered for me in a way Powell's other books like *Swallow Me Whole* have not. The artwork is amazing and he covers the uncanny in a believable yet dreamlike way. Recommended for fans of Lemire's *Royal City* or *The Underwater Welder*.

Lata says

Story: Confusing. This is what I think happened. Haluska (Hal) has a son with Gus, with whom she no longer lives. Hal's friends live nearby and they have a son Shane. Hal's also been having an affair with Adrian (Ade), who is also Shane's father, for years, meeting up in a cave. One day Shane gets trapped in the cave when he and Jake are hanging out. Everyone starts to look for Shane, and then,..., they don't remember Shane. This gives the story a horror/fantasy feel. After failing to get anyone interested in Shane, including his parents, Hal decides to look for the boy.

Artwork: I liked this a lot, though sometimes Powell's images made it hard to understand what was going on in the story. I did love how he had the characters speak, and how he drew mumbling, rushed sentences, and other things people do when they speak. There was also a lot of black, which made it hard sometimes to decipher moments. I liked how the images often had a lot of movement and sometimes even looked beautiful.

Because I'm left puzzled by this story, I'm giving it 3 stars.

Saurabh says

I am confused and unclear on what went on in those pages. Tried to force myself to read page after page hoping it will get somewhere...

A black and dark, twisted and anti-chronological mess. I am angry at myself now.

Danica says

Dark and twisted, with heart at the centre.

Matt Graupman says

At this point in his prolific career (seriously, I think only Jeff Lemire works anywhere near as hard), I think it's safe to say that I'm going to love any book by Nate Powell. There's no one making work quite like his: exquisitely drawn, earnest, poetically stream-of-consciousness, nostalgic, and open, in every sense of the word. Of course his latest graphic novel, "Come Again," is no different. Nate Powell is incapable of making anything less than an inscrutable masterpiece.

"Come Again" is Powell's return to personal storytelling, after his acclaimed three-volume civil rights epic, "MARCH," with Congressman John Lewis and his aide, Andrew Aydin, and a comic adaptation of Rick Riordan's "The Lost Hero." It tells the story of Haluska, a young mother living on a hippy-ish commune in the Ozarks, a seemingly idyllic place that harbors secrets both intimate and supernatural. Much like his work in "Swallow Me Whole" and "Any Empire" (both flawless comics in their own right), "Come Again" follows its own dreamy logic that encompasses forbidden love, punk music, morality, nature, and the metaphysical. Powell's books are absorbed by your eyes and your brain but they're read by your soul. If that sounds melodramatic or hyperbolic, that's only because I don't think it can be understated how artistic and uncompromising Powell's comics are; it's shocking and wonderful that he's achieved such mainstream success.

I met Nate Powell for the first time at TCAF last year and he's just as kind and thoughtful as I'd hoped. At the time, he was toting around his original pages for what would eventually become "Come Again" and he actually offered to let me take a peek. I was with my sons so I didn't have the time to flip through his work which, until I got this book in my hands, I absolutely regretted not taking him up on his offer. But, as incredible as it would've been to see "Come Again" in progress, I'm glad that reading it in its entirety as a finished book was my first exposure to the story. This is the way it was meant to be experienced and, in typical Nate Powell fashion, it weaves a hypnotic spell.

Jakub Kvíz says

Trochu me prekvapuje nizky hodnoceni tady na GR, ale kdyz se clovek podiva na ty recenze, tak uvidi, ze lidi davaj 2*, protoze "to nepochopili".

Come Again neni uplne oddechovy cteni nekam k vode, ale je to vec, ktera ve vas jeste chvili po precteni rezonuje a nuti vas nad ni premejslet.

Premisa pribehu, kterej se odehrava v 70. letech v oblasti Ozarks v Arkansasu, je celkem jednoducha. Mame tu hippie sobestacnou komunitu, ktera zije stranou od civilizace a ustredni postavu szira tajemstvi.

Vizualni zpracovani je naprosto super, dve casovy linie jsou od sebe oddeleny ruznym barevnym ladeni a snovy pasaze jsou taky povedeny.

Nate Powell je popravu mnohonasobne ocenovany autor a kreslir a k Come Again musi clovek pristupovat jako ke graficke novele, ne americkemu komiksu. Rozhodne doporučuju, je to silnej zazitek :).

Derek Royal says

Once again, Nate Powell provides a moving and free-flowing story that is part and parcel of his art style. Just as his illustrative work seems to just flow rhythmically across the page, so does his storytelling have the same kind of nature. It moves like a wisp, flowing from one "panel" to the next in dreamlike manner. This is another work that I'm going to have to reread, multiple times, to appreciate more fully.

Peacegal says

I've been watching a lot of esoteric horror films in recent months, and this comic seems to be an extension of the kind of open-ended storytelling found in "The Endless," "Enemy," or "Hereditary." And like those films, there were elements of this book I found stunning and thought-provoking, and those I was just confused by. I'm glad there are some other reviewers here who also seemed flummoxed by the storyline.

MK King says

I love Nate Powell's work but this story was too difficult to unpack for me. Everything revolves around a hippy commune in the 70s but there's the element of a mysterious and mystical Hobbit cave that only serves, in my opinion, to confuse the story.

If there was a deeper meaning or symbolism to the cave then I missed it although the book is dedicated to Ursula K LeGuin so perhaps I've misread this book entirely as it deserves an appreciation within the Fantasy genre. That would explain the cave and it would explain my inability to comprehend the cave parts due to my inexperience with that genre. Regardless, the art was outstanding as always and I'll probably let this one sit with me and reread at some point.
